

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**RS20828**

This legislation relates to alcohol beverage licenses in Idaho; amending Section 23-940, Idaho Code, to create an Alcohol Beverage Control Fund and to provide for the use of the fund moneys;

A legislative change is proposed to secure dedicated funding for ABC. It creates a dedicated account and funding source for ABC staffing and operations by changes to Idaho Code § 23-940. Idaho Code § 23-804 charges the Idaho State Police with the responsibility and duty of assisting in the policing of the state of Idaho to enforce and require the enforcement of the penal provisions of the Idaho liquor act. Currently ABC has one Detective (partially grant funded), to cover the entire state. Approximately 5,000 establishments are licensed in Idaho to sell and dispense alcoholic beverages. Alcohol Beverage Control is responsible for the administration and issuance of licenses, background checks of potential licensees, premise checks of licensed establishments, enforcement and interpretations of alcohol beverage laws. ABC conducts underage drinking compliance checks, investigates serving intoxicated patrons, provides training, and investigates or assists other law enforcement agencies investigating criminal activity associated with licensed alcohol beverage establishments such as gambling, prohibited acts, smuggling and sale of non Idaho liquor, providing alcohol to minors, and serving intoxicated patrons. The number of licenses issued, complaints, investigations, litigation and requests for assistance from other agencies has continued to rise. ABC is not able to adequately ensure compliance with the alcohol beverage regulations or sufficiently support other agencies' requests for assistance. With adequate staffing ABC could proactively ensure compliance with alcohol beverage laws consistently throughout the state; enhance customer service through increased assistance to licensees and other law enforcement agencies; and provide more efficient service for the citizens of Idaho. ABC is severely understaffed at one field officer to regulate approximately 5,000 licensed establishments and enforce alcohol beverage related laws statewide.

FISCAL NOTE

Approximately \$1,500,000 from license fees, which currently are deposited in the general fund, would be deposited in the newly created account dedicated to funding ABC.

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